



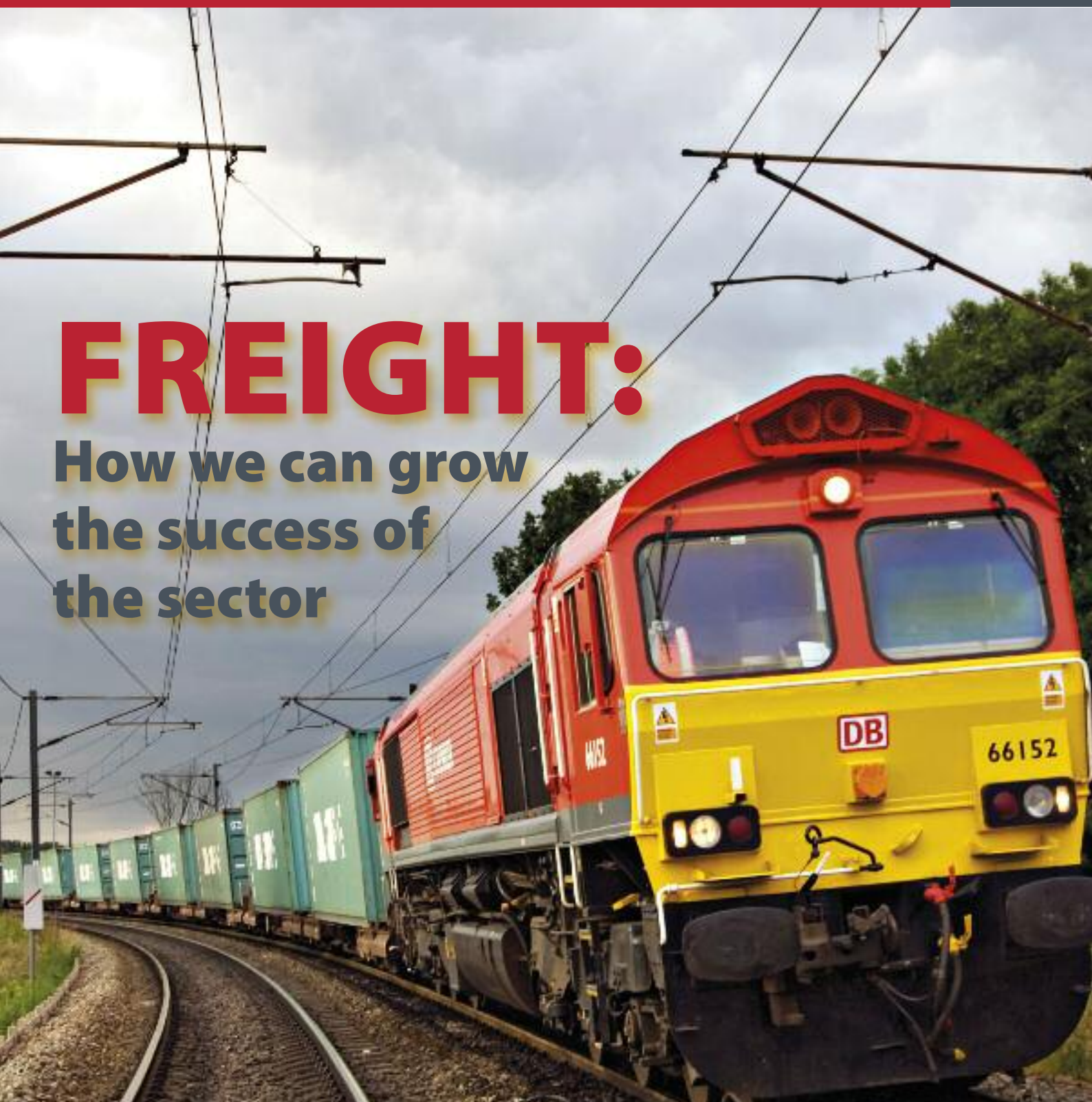
ASLEF

PUBLISHED BY THE ASSOCIATED SOCIETY OF LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS AND FIREMEN

JOURNAL
MAY 2013

FREIGHT:

How we can grow
the success of
the sector



11

Trident: Jobs enrich,
nuclear missiles waste

8

Coroners' Courts: Striving
to end inquest trauma

More than
just a **union**

railway enginemen's **saver** plans

tax free savings plans
just for people who
work on the railways...

just don't tell any bus drivers!

for further information call us
on **freephone 0800 328 9140**

visit our website at
www.enginemens.co.uk

or write to us at Railway Enginemen's Assurance Society Limited,
727 Washwood Heath Road, Birmingham, B8 2LE



railway enginemen's
assurance society

Authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority
Incorporated under the Friendly Societies Act 1992





The problem is not Thatcher: it is Thatcherism

I didn't join the protestors or demonstrators who went to Margaret Thatcher's funeral last month. This wasn't just because I happened to be in Scotland at the STUC and Labour Party conferences at the time. It was because, although I understood those who did wish to show their disdain for her actions, I couldn't see the point in turning my back on the coffin of a demented pensioner.

Thatcher was a driven woman who hated working people and the trade unions they used to defend themselves. Her policies destroyed British manufacturing and sought to end any idea of community. They promoted greed as an acceptable moral standard, destroyed the notion of public service and were responsible for the creation of the nasty 'me' society.

Her policies did that, not her. It is those policies and the evil they introduced that cry out for our attention. Would that it was as easy as shouting at a coffin to overturn the consequences of her period in office! But it isn't.

Thatcher's policies won three consecutive elections. Our concern and attention should be focussed on that. How is it that Labour had no popular alternatives to put before the electorate? Why were we incapable of uniting the country against such a vicious series of attacks on working people – who are the majority of the populace? How did it happen that, rather than propose radical changes of our own, we fell into an apathetic stupor, and treated her vision as one that could not be changed?

Thatcher's policies can be overturned, and a more civilised, sharing, concerned, human, tolerant and equal society can be achieved. But it will take courage, idealism - and hard work. Labour needs to be bold and assertive. It needs to convince the electorate of the attractiveness of our alternative vision.

Thatcherism will only be defeated politically. We will know we have won when we have a Prime Minister who says with conviction, 'Where there was bigotry, we brought equality. Where there was greed, we brought fraternity. And where there was disadvantage, we brought succor.'

Mick Whelan, General Secretary



4



11

News

4

- National day of action 4
- Rail rush as Tories 'expect defeat' 5
- ASLEF Scots learners recognised / ASLEF at Wales Labour 6
- Union seeks to end coroner attendance / Tube driver compensated after faulty tracks injury 8
- Hypocritical Tories want LU strike ban 9



6

Features

10

- Why the campaign for Hillsborough justice matters 10
- £100 billion – for jobs or nukes? 11
- How to build on rail freight successes 12-13
- Key Worker: 60 years on: meetings with remarkable (footplate) men 14-15



9

Regulars

17

- Branch News 16-17
- Obituaries 19
- Letters 20-22
- Prize Crossword/Legal services for members 23



15

ABOUT ASLEF

Aslef Journal published monthly by ASLEF

✉ 77 St John Street London EC1M 4NN ☎ 020 7324 2400

📠 020 7490 8697 📧 journal@aslef.org.uk 🌐 www.aslef.org.uk

ASLEF JOURNAL | EDITOR Mick Whelan | PRINTED BY TU ink, London EC2A 4QS | GRAPHIC DESIGN Michael Cronin

ADVERTISING Ten Alps Media, 1 New Oxford Street, High Holborn, London, WC1A 1NU | ADVERTISING CONTACTS Contact claire.barber@tenalps.com Tel : 020 7878 2319 MEMBER SMALL ADS Email journal@aslef.org.uk or call headquarters.

The acceptance of an advert does not necessarily imply endorsement of that product or service by ASLEF. CHANGE OF ADDRESS Please post your details to ASLEF, 77 St John Street, Clerkenwell, London, EC1M 4NN.

**More than
just a union**

National day of action

ASLEF-backed Action for Rail held a national day of action on Wednesday 27 March – the date of the 50th anniversary of the publication of the Beeching Report.

Action for Rail campaigners were out and about, meeting passengers at 35 stations around the UK and urging them to forward postcards to their MP demanding an affordable, people-centered rail service that puts passengers before train company profits.

The TUC-organised protests coincided with train operating companies preparing to embark upon a new programme of cost-cutting over the next six years that could see:

- Over 20,000 railway jobs put at risk,
- the closure of 675 ticket offices and
- a 50% increase in the number of unstaffed stations.

Train companies are



Snappers catch the event at Euston where ASLEF's Mick Whelan, Marz Colombini and Simon Weller were among the protestors

driving through the cuts in an attempt to find £3.5bn in efficiency savings requested by the government before 2019.

The TUC believes that if the cuts go ahead 10% of rail staff - including guards, maintenance workers and ticket office staff – could lose their jobs and around three-quarters of all the UK's railway stations could become unstaffed.

ASLEF's General Secretary Mick Whelan, who was at Euston station, said, 'Beeching's vandalism was the worst example of the malaise of short-term thinking that



Colin Smith (left) says while they posed next to the Ken Dodd statue, the future of the railways is no joke

has beleaguered our industry throughout its history.

'A successful rail network is planned carefully for decades ahead. It isn't subjected to short-term, utterly-unimaginative sticking-plaster solutions like letting franchises, reducing services, poking up fares and cutting staff.'

RMT General Secretary Bob Crow called for 'putting right the wrongs of the past' and working for 'an expanded, integrated and publicly-owned railway at the heart of future transport policy', while the TSSA's Manual Cortes said, 'Further cuts are not the answer, as Beeching proved so comprehensively five decades ago.'

EC member Howard Kaye (centre) with Dave Tyson and Paul Cutmore made sure Norwich passengers knew of the threat to rail



District Organiser Dicky Fisher (right) was among the activists at Milton Keynes



Nick Whitehead, Nick Craven and Pete Bell met passengers at Leeds station



A famous five ASLEF members joined the leafleting at Doncaster, with vice-President Tosh McDonald appearing on Yorkshire TV

Union backs Douglass Memorial



This is the plaque ASLEF helped to erect in Whiteheads Grove, London SW3

Mick Whelan spoke at the inauguration of a plaque honouring Frederick Douglass in central London last month. The union, through its Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) section, was the first sponsor of the initiative.

Frederick Douglass was born a slave but escaped to become a major American social reformer, orator, writer, statesman and leader of the abolitionist movement. He was a perfect response to the slave-owners who argued that slaves were not intelligent enough to be US citizens. He was an inspired campaigner for equality who once said, 'I would unite with anybody to do right and with nobody to do wrong.'

Representatives from the BEM Committee Floyd Doyle and Ronald Gordon-Hill joined the union's Equalities Advisor Lee James at the ceremony.



Mick said ASLEF was proud to pay tribute to 'the remarkable life of an extraordinary campaigner'

An English Heritage Blue Plaque has also been erected in Wesley Road in London's East End at the house where Harry Beck was born. He was the person who designed London's distinctive Tube Map 80 years ago.



Harry Beck realised that commuters don't need to know accurate distances between stations

Rail rush as Tories 'expect defeat'

Mick Whelan said last month's unseemly rush to dish out rail franchises shows that the Tories are expecting a defeat at the 2015 general election. 'They are announcing plans to hurry out ten franchises in the next two years. Why? To stop Labour having the option of taking over rail franchises - because the East Coast Main Line has consistently shown the not-for-profit model to be an outstanding success. It is a victory for Conservative dogma over practical strategy.'

Mick said it was astonishing that the announcement was made even as there is an active public debate over the way rail franchising should be implemented - and even if it should continue.

'Transport Secretary Patrick McLoughlin said he was going to review franchising but he

is trapped by the weary anti-public dogma of the grey John Major years. Last month's announcement is a panic measure to prevent rail becoming a public service rather than a private milch cow.'

The rail minister announced

- an extension for Virgin Rail on the West Coast Main Line beyond the 2015 general election
- hiving off the East Coast Main Line (again, after National Express reneged on its £1.4bn contract for the route franchise deal in 2009 as the company was worried its profits might not be high enough)
- plans to let ten more franchises before the general election.

Mick said it was 'almost, but not, funny' that Mr McLoughlin said, 'I think franchising has

done a huge amount for the railway industry.' Mick says it has, in a way. 'It has taken railway profits away from our industry and popped it into investor's pockets,' he says. 'It has removed money that could have been invested in the future of rail. And it has cost the taxpayer millions in failed bids. So in a way it has done a huge amount!'

He insists that the Labour Party proposal to retain East Coast line in the public sector to act as a benchmark for privately-run franchises would at least be a move in the right direction. 'It is a sign of the government's total lack of confidence in their private friends that it will not tolerate a fair comparator,' he says.

He points out that the not-for-profit publicly-owned Directly Operated Railways has become one of Britain's most profitable train operating companies which by the end of last year had returned £640m in premium payments to the government since it started operations in November 2009.



Mick Whelan addressing the (London) District 8 council that met in the Palace of Westminster last month. Other speakers included Tony West, Val Shawcross, Roger Sutton, Lillian Greenwood, John Cryer MP, Lord Monks and Byron Taylor

Football fascist fracas

The Durham Miners' Association (DMA) has demanded that Sunderland football club returns the Wearmouth Miners' Banner, which it lent to the club and has been on permanent

display in the Stadium of Light. The move was a response to Sunderland appointing self-proclaimed fascist Paolo Di Canio as its manager.

Dave Hopper, the

DMA General Secretary, worked for 27 years at the Wearmouth Colliery, where the Stadium of Light now stands. He described Di Canio's appointment as 'an outrage and a betrayal of all those who fought and died fighting fascism'.

He said that although a life-long Sunderland supporter, there were things more important than football.

The DMA is calling on the Sunderland board to reverse its decision to appoint Di Canio.



Stadium of Gloom?

No ban for Norwich crossing motorist

A woman who drove her car onto a level crossing while the barriers were going down last December has been fined £400, but not given a driving ban.

The prompt braking action of the train driver gave 55-year old Susan Anderson time to reverse her Ford Fiesta off the crossing in Salhouse Road, Rackheath, near Norwich.

A BTP spokesman said it was incredible that people put their lives on the line by ignoring



The British Transport Police released this image taken from the cab of the train to warn motorists of the danger of ignoring level crossing barriers.

warning lights and sirens, and that is hopes to educate people of the dangers.

THOUSANDS OF CIVIL SERVANTS TO LOSE RIGHT TO STRIKE

The TUC has called upon the House of Lords to reject plans in the Crime and Courts Bill which would prevent over 3,000 civil servants working for the National Crime Agency from taking strike action in the future.

TUC general secretary Frances O'Grady said, 'The right to strike is a fundamental human right. To remove it from a group of civil servants is draconian and unnecessary.

'Unions will always work to reach a negotiated settlement during a dispute but as a last resort, and where their members vote for strike action in a ballot, they must all be free to defend their position by withdrawing their labour.'

ASLEF Scots learners recognised

TWO ASLEF members have been presented with Highlands & Islands (H&I) Union Learning Awards at a red-carpet event at Inverness College for being 'recognised as true ambassadors for life-long learning'.

Andrew Gardner is one of the most experienced union learning reps (ULRs) in the region and he's organised courses including Back to Basics, British Sign Language and various IT courses. Feedback from some of these learners highlights that many of them had been away from education for many years and if it wasn't for Andrew they would not have taken that first step back into learning.

Ronald Payne left school at fifteen and a

half to an apprentice – but he's made up for it since! A TM since the end of last year, Ronald first took up union-led learning with an IT course to help him produce better reports in his role as the workplace Health and Safety rep. He quickly progressed through more advanced IT courses to achieve a NOCN Level 3 IT award (equivalent of SCQF Level 6 or Scottish Higher).

The ceremony marked ten years of union-led learning in the region and showcased the achievements of learners and Union Learning Reps. Grahame Smith, the STUC General Secretary, said, 'In the last four years, the Highlands & Islands Learning Fund has supported over 140 courses benefiting over 1200 learners.'



The STUC will be using Andrew (left) and Ronald's case studies and photos for Scottish Union Learning publicity materials during the coming year.

ASLEF at Wales Labour

JOHN BOREHAM reports that, along with District Organiser Stan Moran, he had the great pleasure of representing the Society at a very cold and snowy Llandudno for the Wales Labour Conference.

Highlights included excellent speeches from First Minister Carwyn Jones and Owen Smith, the shadow Secretary of State for Wales. Carwyn stressed the work of trade unions, and the debt Welsh Labour owes them.

'During the conference we met a number of senior politicians in the Wales Assembly and held a very productive meeting with Edwina Hart the new Transport

Minister in the Wales Government.

At the meeting with Edwina she agreed to set up a series of formal meetings with our General Secretary to discuss 'not for profit' rail and to a series of informal meetings with ASLEF representatives to discuss our fears, hopes and dreams for rail in Wales.

John says, 'To those who say trade unions should leave politics to one side and concentrate on their members, I say, 'You need to see the respect that senior politicians hold for our Society and to understand that because of that we have a major opportunity to influence transport policy for the benefit of all our members.'

He also records his gratitude to all those members who gave him the opportunity to represent them at this important conference.

Hope not hate: chewing over racism

ASLEF members were out in strength at last month's fundraising dinner in London for 'Hope not Hate', the campaign which celebrates Britain's diverse society and organises against the extreme right. Other supporters included journalists, campaigners, community workers and trade unionists from across the country.

The editor of the Daily Mirror, Lloyd Embley, presented awards to recognise

people who work in their communities to tackle the far right threat. These included Shamshul Iqbal, Zeinab Mohamed and Sajda Mughal who, after surviving a 7/7 blast quit her job as an investment banker to concentrate on teaching. Chris Keene from Burnley was also awarded a 'community champion' award.

ASLEF people at the event included general secretary Mick Whelan, EC members Dave Calfe and Howard Kaye, District Organisers Dicky Fisher and Nigel Gibson, BEM Representative Committee members Floyd Doyle, Ronald Gordon-Hill and myself, Lee James,



The rapper Speech DeBelle is patron of Hope Not Hate and she congratulated the unions and the Daily Mirror for helping to highlight the cause

our Equalities Advisor and Euston branch secretary Cliff Holloway.

For further information and on-going support for the Hope not Hate campaign go to www.hopenothate.org.uk

● Report from Ed D'Bell - BEM Representative Committee Member - District 1

Transport to the fore at pension conference

Last month ASLEF sent a strong delegation to the seventh conference of the National Pensioners Convention which was held in Southport. They made an early start, leafleting outside Southport Station for an hour before the



conference began. They called for fair fares and the rejection of the McNulty report.

Ron Douglas, the new NPC president,

and Dot Gibson, the organisation's general secretary, gave their support.

Peter (PJ) Smith, the Reporter of

ASLEF's Retired Members' Section, said, 'We distributed over 700 leaflets in a very satisfying start to the day.'

ASLEF delegates were joined by delegates from NPC, RMT, TSSA, GMB and UNITE



Floyd Doyle and the GS demonstrate fraternal harmony, while Dicky Fisher keeps on eye on proceedings!



Whatever life throws at you ASLEF will help to protect you.

We offer a range of services to ASLEF members including legal advice and representation on:*

- Personal injury at work
- Personal injury away from work
- Road traffic accident injury
- Industrial disease or illness
- Criminal law representation (for work-related matters)
- Free will writing service
- 30 minutes free telephone advice for any non-work issues such as landlord disputes, neighbourhood disputes, matrimonial and consumer issues
- Employment law accessed through your ASLEF district organiser

We offer a range of services to ASLEF members and their families, including legal advice and representation on:*

- Personal injury away from work
- Road traffic accident injury
- Special terms for clinical negligence cases
- Reduced rates for conveyancing and family member wills

For more information call ASLEF on 0808 100 8009



THE MOST EXPERIENCED
PERSONAL INJURY FIRM IN THE UK
www.thompsons.law.co.uk

* Exclusions apply. Thompsons Solicitors is a trading name of Thompsons Solicitors LLP and is regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority.

Union seeks to end coroner attendance

THE union has been asked by the Ministry of Justice to comment on proposals to change how Coroners' Courts operate. We have responded by saying that ASLEF would like it to become standard practice for Coroners to accept a written statement from any train driver involved in a suicide fatality rather than insisting on attendance. We would like to see the driver statement read out in court and to dispense with the requirement that the driver should attend the inquest.

In the case of non-suicide fatalities (like a level crossing incident) we want coroners to seriously consider if they need drivers to attend and make it a priority that usually they need not. A train driver's evidence could be given in writing along with that from sources

like the Rail Accident Investigation Branch or Office of Rail Regulation.

We have pointed out that train drivers involved in any incident on the railway involving the loss of life can - and do - suffer severe emotional upheaval which affects them for the rest of their lives. In addition, the proposed Statutory Instrument on Coroners allows for written evidence to be used at inquests (S.22) and Section 45 of the 2009 Coroners and Justice Act allows the Lord Chief Justice (or Chief Coroner if so delegated) to issue practice directions setting rules for Coroners in England and Wales.

We have offered to back our case by providing details of some of the trauma suffered by our members and to explain the

experience of a fatality, suicide or not. Our submission concludes, 'Therefore, to be forced to re-visit the trauma of an incident (which the driver could not have prevented in any way) by having to attend an inquest when the evidence that is needed can be presented to the court via a statement appears, to many of our members, to be a further injury to an innocent victim. To have to endure giving evidence in court and being cross questioned adds to the trauma and meeting the family and friends of the deceased, who can sometimes be hostile to the driver, can at best be awkward and at worst be highly distressing.'

ASLEF judges all these incidents as a crime against the driver; and, as victims of a crime, they should not need to endure attending an inquest. We would, however, still want to be kept informed of the outcome of any inquest or prosecution arising from an incident.

Tube driver compensated after faulty tracks injury

A tube train driver who so badly sprained and damaged his ankle that it was in plaster for eight weeks after his train ran across bumpy tracks has received compensation.

The union argued that London Underground had ignored concerns about the condition of the lines on the Jubilee Line near Kingsbury Station and that no speed restrictions were put in

place to prevent the train from being jerked around on the uneven track.

This resulted in his foot becoming trapped and twisted under the foot rest in the train cab.

He still suffers pain in his foot and doctors say he is likely to suffer from the pain the rest of his life.

Thompsons Solicitors acted for ASLEF and after representations London Underground admitted liability and settled the claim out of court.

The ASLEF member said, 'A number of us from North Greenwich depot had spoken to management about this particular stretch of track because we thought a speed restriction should be in place until the works were finished. Our complaints were ignored and I ended up injured and off work. The restrictions were eventually put in place but by then it was too late for me.'



It is thought these bodies were buried in a graveyard opened in 1348

Black Death near union headquarters!

Just down the road from ASLEF's Farringdon head office, Crossrail archaeologists have discovered a mass burial site believed to be the final resting place of 14th century Black Death victims.

Thirteen skeletons, thought to be around 660 years old, were found laid out in rows 2.5 metres below the road surrounding Charterhouse Square.

The limited written records suggest up to 50,000 people may have been buried in less than three years in the make-shift cemetery,

with the burial ground used up until the 1500s.

Experts hope the find will help to establish the exact cause of the Black Death plague which wiped out more than a third of England's population in the 14th century.

These are not the first skeletons found on the Crossrail project. Archaeologists have already uncovered more than 300 burials at the New Cemetery near the site of the Bedlam Hospital at Liverpool Street from the 1500s to 1700s.



GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY REMEMBERED

The railway vicar Richard Cook tells us that a special service is to be held at 15:00 on 8 August at Crewe station to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Great Train Robbery.

The robbery actually took place at 03:00 but Richard tells us he doesn't think they would pull in much of a crowd at that time!

Richard says he hopes some ASLEF members will come along to remember Jack Mills on that day.



View towards 'Sears Crossing' where the robbers took control of the train

Parliament Reception

The union arranged a reception in Parliament last month in an effort to convince MPs, other political opinion-formers and journalists that we need a major re-think about the financing of the UK railways and to lobby them on issues like asbestos, pensions and other matters important to members.

A good number of MPs came along to the short social event. Mick Whelan said afterwards that it had been a useful opportunity to mingle informally with politicians, away from the usual confrontational Parliamentary style.



Mick welcomed MPs and other guests. 'This is how Parliament should be run,' he said. 'Somewhere that views can be exchanged honestly without pomposity or pretentiousness.'



ASLEF reps from all levels took the opportunity of collaring politicians – and putting them straight!

Hypocritical Tories want LU strike ban

Conservative members of the London Assembly have again called for strikes on the Tube to be banned. Mick Whelan, ASLEF's general secretary, says this demand to remove a basic human right is 'extremist and hypocritical'.

'It does raise the question of what malicious acts they are planning against our members to merit such an extreme call from London Tories,' Mick says.

He points out that the authorities already have numerous legal hurdles in place

before industrial action can take place, and that both workers and management have access to internal and external arbitration.

Mick points out that the Conservative group has a record of extreme demands

and a history of hypocrisy. 'They are also demanding that over half our eligible members must vote for action before a strike can be legal – when their Mayor polled under 40% of London votes!' he points out.



Thirty representatives from the freight sector discussed how to advance existing policies and to develop the union's freight strategy last month. The meeting was held at the Marx Memorial Library, a few minutes stroll from the ASLEF head office

ROYAL TRAIN MEDALS

Last month we printed the names of drivers awarded the Queen's Diamond Jubilee medal for services to the Royal Train – and it led to quite a deluge of questions from other ASLEF members. We were rung up and written to with a single question: 'Why not me?'

Retired member John Priseman's letter summed it up. 'I feel this award should also go to our retired drivers who have worked the Royal Train,' he told us. 'I was also a Royal Train Driver at Bescot Depot and I would very much like to receive this award.' John last took the Queen and Prince Philip on 19 April 2000, and guards the timetable of that day.

General Secretary Mick Whelan says he has the greatest sympathy with all those who feel they have missed out. 'But the fact is, there is nothing we can do,' he says. 'We were not consulted about the awards – it was decided between the companies and the Palace.'

However, he has written to the Palace referring them to the disappointment that many drivers felt at their exclusion and asked that consideration be given to making retrospective awards to more drivers of the Royal Train.

ASLEF wins domestic violence rumpus at women's TUC

The TUC women's conference was trolling along its uncontroversial way last month – until ASLEF's motion hit the podium! reports **Julie Clegg-Haver**.

We presented two motions to conference: 'The Other side to Domestic Violence' and 'Transport Poverty'. Guess which one brought excitement to the floor?

You guessed it – the domestic violence motion! Deborah Reay gave our fight an excellent start, by saying domestic abuse by women has increased by 150% in the last 5 years. For the second year running, the TUC Women's Committee wanted us to remit our motion. This time we said no.

We were calling for the TUC Women's Committee to lobby the government for gender specific rehabilitation, by re-

examining the recommendations in the 2007 Corston Report, as women get harsher sentences than men due to it being seen as pre-meditated. We also want to fight cuts to funding of community alternatives.

We stood our ground and were joined by the POA, PCS and USDAW. Despite opposition from both UNISON and UNITE, the debate ended with 112 in favour, 79 against and 46 abstentions. Motion carried! Fantastic

result.

In contrast, there was total agreement as ASLEF's Kirstie Wood seconded an RMT motion opposing McNulty and calling for below inflation fare rises, a fare structure which is not detrimental to part-time workers and support for the Action For Rail campaign.

I'd like to applaud Wendy Hurst (WRC Secretary) who gave an excellent speech at the Justice For Columbia fringe meeting and thank all the union's Women's Representative Committee for their hard work. Well done, ladies!



ASLEF's delegation to last month's Women's TUC conference were Wendy Hurst, Kirstie Wood, Deborah Reay and Julie Clegg-Haver

500 CLUB WINNER

The winning number this month is 19, and J. Wragg won the prize money of £304, reports Alan Taylor of the RMS Committee.

Why the campaign for Hillsborough justice matters

One Saturday 24 years ago Peter Mason, a driver in our Crewe branch, swapped his ticket for the Leppings Lane section of Sheffield's Hillsborough stadium for a seat in the stands. He was at Liverpool FC's FA Cup semi-final against Nottingham Forest. Hours later, the disaster that cost 96 lives and left 766 people injured unfolded before his eyes. Here he explains why the campaign to reveal exactly what happened on that day matters so much to him - and what it means to his city ...



A new Hillsborough memorial was unveiled in Liverpool last month, a symbol of memories that will not be erased

THE city of Liverpool will never forget the date of 15 April 1989. But another date will also now be etched onto our collective memory: 12 September 2012. That was when the long fight to discover what really happened at Hillsborough moved one step closer.

A heavy cloud was lifted from the conscience of this proud maritime enclave, unshackling many of the emotional chains that had constrained us for over two decades. At last we could discover the real truth.

Liverpool is a welcoming city with Scouse wit and warmth in bucket loads; it is, as a port, a place of diverse cultures; and it has a tradition of socialism like that of former Liverpool manager Bill Shankly. But it doesn't suffer fools gladly – or those who perpetrate slurs on it as the wider authorities did in April 1989.

The Hillsborough Independent Panel (HIP) finally revealed the extent of the lies and huge

miscarriage of justice last year. It showed that 164 police statements had been altered by the police themselves. The authorities had never reckoned on the spirit and sense of justice in our world-renowned port. They should have looked at our history.

It was in Liverpool that men like James Larkin came to prominence during the 70-day stand-off that was the 1911 Great Transport Strike. Larkin was a champion of the workers, who believed that class should always transcend religious divide. In 1919 our city saw the 'Police Strike', the last time they took industrial action before the state withdrew this right from them. Then there was the 1926 General Strike when the guns of warships were pointed at our city.

The Toxteth riots of the 1980s were a catalyst to widespread unrest among downtrodden ethnic working class communities around the country. Liverpool's Council stood shoulder to shoulder with the

miners Thatcher sought to tyrannize. We resisted every attempt to batter working class communities into submission because it is in our genes and our fabric. Neither should we forget the Liverpool dockers' dispute and the international solidarity it engendered.

NO LONGER THE HILLSBOROUGH SCAPEGOATS

Thatcher and her allies like Murdoch used Hillsborough to demonise and isolate the region. Somehow we were guilty of a crime for turning up to support our football team. For months we knew despair. The subject was taboo. We lived in silence. The mud the authorities slung stuck to us all.

But this didn't last. Eventually Hillsborough politicised a generation, so that young and old now speak the same political language. Conservatism was denounced in the '80s and, despite Cameron's apology, it remains tainted. We remember the Prime Minister saying seeking the truth about Hillsborough 'would be like a blind man looking for a black cat in a

“ THATCHER AND HER ALLIES USED HILLSBOROUGH TO DEMONISE AND ISOLATE THE REGION ”

dark room'.

Many innocent Liverpool people who went nowhere near the stadium paid dearly for Hillsborough. Some went to the edge; brothers took their own lives; friendships were compromised; marriages and relationships fell apart. Largely we have overcome. But we will never forget.

In a historical context, Hillsborough will be seen as a triumph for socialist principles by a predominantly socialist city. It became a common cause that unified the city and swept aside all the obstacles put in front of its demand for justice. And it was done by ordinary men and women, able volunteers too numerous to mention from both red and blue sides of the city.

I will never forget the horrors of that day in a Sheffield football stadium 24 years ago. But I have also been fortunate to see a city coming together, putting aside its tribal rivalries and showing the remarkable strength of human beings in adversity. We have learnt that comradeship and people fighting together transcend everything.

The truth is out. Now it is time for justice. Only then can the families and survivors begin to think about closure.

○ For more information on the Hillsborough Justice Campaign see www.contrast.org/hillsborough

£100 billion – for jobs or nukes?

The Aldermaston 2013 April Fools' protest was a great success this year with thousands of people gathering to tell the government 'Stop Fooling With Nuclear Weapons'. Protesters covered each of the base's six gates and speakers included Green Party Leader Natalie Bennett, Jeremy Corbyn MP, and fashion designer Katharine Hamnett.

THE theme of the protest was light hearted but the issue is not. The Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) Aldermaston has been at the centre of Britain's nuclear weapons production since 1950. Britain's first atom bomb, tested off the coast of Australia in October 1952, was built at Aldermaston. This is where the warheads for the current Trident system were built.

Just one Trident warhead is eight times stronger than the bomb dropped on Hiroshima, Japan which killed over 200,000 people. Britain currently has approximately 220 of these bombs. Trident is the same system that was originally designed to 'flatten Moscow'. Research shows that if it were ever used it could result in 5.4 million deaths. Its very existence is immoral and illegal.

For many working people, the main reason to oppose Trident, besides its lethal immorality, is its extreme cost.

The current bill for replacing Trident is £100 billion and rising. Trident sucks billions out of the MOD budget, as well as the wider economy, leading to widespread job cuts across the armed forces. At this time of cuts to jobs, housing and public services, £100 billion could be better spent elsewhere.

£3 billion of our taxes goes to Trident each year. By comparison, building a state-of-the-art hospital costs around £545 million. Providing free school dinners for children from families in receipt of Universal Credit would cost around £500 million per year. There are very few people who cannot think of a better use for £100 billion than nuclear weapons.

Whilst some local jobs rely on AWE, local people are also concerned that the Aldermaston base contains large quantities of explosives, radioactive materials, and hazardous chemicals while its health and safety record remains poor. The government's nuclear safety watchdog (Office for Nuclear Regulation) found 'clear evidence' that the structure of one nuclear processing facility at the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) has degraded to the extent that 'normal operations can no longer be justified'. The residents of Berkshire – not to mention nearby London – are 'exposed to risk' by AWE's failures.

One fire burned for nearly nine hours overnight in a building containing explosives,



CND also launched a month-long national 'Scrap Trident' tour by veteran peace activist Bruce Kent

it took 16 fire engines and 68 firefighters to put it out. The Director of the Nuclear Information Service Peter Burt has said: 'In the event of a major accident at AWE there is no doubt that firefighters and emergency responders would do their bravest and their best, but their task would be like trying to stop a tank with a water

“ JUST ONE TRIDENT WARHEAD IS 8 TIMES STRONGER THAN THE BOMB DROPPED ON HIROSHIMA ”

pistol.' Incredibly, nuclear warheads are also regularly driven up and down the country between Aldermaston and Faslane in Scotland.

This unstable situation is far from inevitable. In March 2007 Parliament voted to start the process of replacing the current Trident system but the final decision on

whether or not to construct new submarines will not be taken until 2016. Billions of pounds are already being spent at Aldermaston building new facilities – suggesting that democracy is being circumvented.

We have until 2016 to make it clear to the government that jobs, healthcare, transport, education and renewable energy mean more to the people of this country than dangerous weapons of mass destruction.

Increasing tensions with North Korea (which has no deliverable nuclear weapons) is a reminder of the dangers of nuclear weapons. Far from being a reason to keep Trident, these problems are additional proof that the world can only be safe once no one has these weapons of mass destruction.

Obama was right to say that every country in the world must 'observe the basic rules and norms that are set forth, including a wide variety of UN resolutions.' This includes the United States and Britain. All states should follow the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) that legally binds all states with nuclear weapons to disarm. No one has the right to nuclear weapons.

The first CND march at Aldermaston took place over Easter in 1958. Protest at the site has helped to bring debate about nuclear weapons into the mainstream and to pile pressure on the government to change course on these illegal, immoral weapons of mass destruction. The majority of the population now opposes Trident and with increased pressure over the next three years we can Scrap Trident and cancel its replacement. We must improve the lives of the British people without threatening the lives of others.

Article by Tansy Hoskins, Trade Union officer for the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. If you are interested in CND's Trade Union campaigns please get in touch via tradeunions@cnduk.org



Demonstrators marched against Government proposals to replace the Trident programme

HOW TO BUILD ON RAIL FREIGHT



The Labour Party is carrying out a review of its transport policies, and has asked for union views about the future. In this article Philippa Edmunds, manager of the 'Freight on Rail' campaign, presents a compelling programme for making rail freight a vibrant and ever-expanding service ...

We welcome the fact that both the last and current governments recognise the importance of rail freight to the economy, society and the environment as part of the intermodal supply chain.

The Strategic Rail Freight Network Vision has not only led to key upgrades of the network which are now coming on stream but has also received further funding on key port and strategic routes in the next five years. We have been able to show that these targeted government interventions work. Since the gauge upgrade out of Southampton was completed in February 2011, rail's market share has increased from 29% to 36% out of the port. This has reduced road congestion, pollution and the risk of road accidents around the port and along the A34 corridor.

Rail freight is a success story which is forecast to continue growing:

- long distance consumer rail freight has increased 61% since 2004, gaining market share as part of an integrated intermodal solution
- the latest government figures for the year 2011/12 show total tonne kms up 10% and consumer (intermodal) freight up 11% on the previous year.

Overall the volume of containers at ports in 2010 was the same as 2005 but rail volumes were 29% up.

Industry forecasts rail traffic doubling between 2010 and 2030 with intermodal quadrupling; however these forecasts are predicated on existing market conditions and that is why it is crucial that we campaigning on the following key areas

- making the case for the revenue grants to be retained beyond 2015
- demonstrating the need for more road/rail transfer points in the right strategic locations.
- challenging the principle behind the Office of Rail Regulation increased freight charges
- securing support for biomass as a replacement traffic for coal,
- working at the EC and UK level to oppose 'mega trucks'.

A NEW RAIL FREIGHT GRANT SCHEME
Revenue Grants are awarded to rail freight flows

in recognition of the congestion, pollution and safety benefits of removing HGV traffic.

The current scheme (MSRS) with a budget of around £18 million a year (which provides good Value for Money (VfM)) expires in March 2015.

A successor scheme needs to be authorised in the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) this June. Without the scheme the Midland flows, which are in the order of 250,000 boxes per year, would revert to road.

PLANNING PERMISSION FOR INTERCHANGES/TERMINALS

'Spatial planning' sounds dull - but one of the key obstacles to achieving increased volumes of rail freight is the lack of planning permission for rail freight interchanges. This applies especially, but not exclusively, to London and the South East.

The irony, given the economic recession, is that the private sector wants to invest in multi modal distribution infrastructure - but the planning system is too slow, tortuous and uncertain. Therefore opportunities to stimulate and regenerate the green economy and create thousands of jobs are being lost.

The coalition government says it supports the development of such facilities - but in practice, Government inaction over the publication of the National Networks National Policy Statement (NPS) has been held up for the past five years.

There is a growing appetite in the retail and commercial sector to use such facilities as part of their supply chain, to achieve more resilient and sustainable operations by reducing dependence on road haulage.

Either we need this NPS, or for the DfT Strategic Rail Freight Interchange policy (SRFI) to be given statutory status as soon as possible to give investor confidence. Ideally the policy needs to state the number of Serifs required in each region.

FREIGHT CHARGES MUST BE BEARABLE

A cross-industry letter has been sent to the rail regulator (ORR) stating that it appears to lack an overarching strategy towards rail freight. We believe that it is essential to set out how the organisation proposes to fulfil its statutory duties and guidance.



A key point for us is that the ORR is only supposed to make charges which the market can bear. However, the regulator's decisions could mean that the variable access charge, paid by all freight traffic, may increase by up to 23% on today's level.

Certain commodities (coal to power stations, spent nuclear fuel and iron ore) will also pay a 'freight specific charge' likely to be phased in between 2014 and 2019. So Scottish coal producers are likely to see their transport costs rise by around 15%, while the steel sector faces a 9% rise in iron ore transport costs. For other sectors also, such as intermodal and aggregates, the prospect of charges rising is deeply concerning.

We need guarantees that the formula of 'charges that can be borne' is not just

Freight SUCCESSES



approach to energy policy could have a serious impact on jobs and investment including rail jobs.

We need commitments to positive support for Biomass.

END THE HGV THREAT

The latest news is that the European Commission has issued a proposal on the revision of the existing directive (96/53) which governs the dimensions of HGVs.

It includes a clause to allow cross border traffic of 25 metre trucks between consenting member states which sounds benign. However, the reality is that would mean that mega trucks will come to the UK by default over time - because despite the fact that the UK government says it will not allow mega trucks, the road haulage industry will claim that it is being disadvantaged. The example of the 7 foot longer trailers permitted by the UK government demonstrated how the government is ready to buckle to industry pressure.

Once the Commission has issued its proposal to the Parliament and Council of Ministers, its involvement finishes until the final (TRILOG) stage towards the end of the process. This next stage, called co-decision, is where the Parliament and Council of Ministers decide their positions. It could last anything from 6-12 months depending on whether the Council and Parliament can agree on an approach which will dictate how many readings (votes) there are. The European Parliament elections in June 2014 add pressure for the revision to be speeded up.

The good news is that the rapporteur who writes the report on the proposal will be from the S&D (Socialist) grouping. We wait to see which MEP from that group gets the position which is decided by the S&D Transport co-ordinator. It is also important who the shadow rapporteurs are from the other political groups as they can submit amendments to the proposal which the rapporteur writes. We work closely with our European partners and with Brian Simpson, the MEP who is chair of the Transport Committee.

From bitter experience and five years of campaigning, we all know the arguments and once again we are asking you to write to MEPs and MP on the issue. There are sample letters, briefing sheets with relevant data, recent research/press releases and a link to find your MEPs on the Freight on Rail website (details below).

It's now or never - a concerted campaign can make a difference. We stopped the UK government allowing trials in 2008. ASLEF's massive campaign at the Labour Party Conference and all our joint lobbying was instrumental in this decision.

We seek guarantees that the UK government will continue to argue against longer and heavier vehicles on our roads. It is bad for the environment, for safety, for congestion - and for rail freight.

brought on stream quickly.

However, Biomass can only be part of the UK's low carbon renewable energy solution as long as it is supported by government policy across the different departments. At the moment the ORR proposed increases to freight charges are not aligned with government work on renewable obligations - which could leave a funding gap.

This could in turn result in investors failing to commit to the market. Without investment, biomass generation and rail freight will fail. High charges now (before a market has had time to develop) could undermine biomass generation and rail freight services. This lack of joined up

○ For further information, campaign materials, consultation responses and background research documents, visit the Freight on Rail website which is www.freightonrail.org.uk

continued, but implemented.

SUPPORT FOR BIOMASS

Biomass is an emerging market and needs government support if it is to expand and become a viable alternative to coal. Coal currently makes up around a third of rail freight traffic and is forecast to reduce significantly, in line with energy policy, over the coming decade.

The proposed increased freight access charges for biomass (which is being consulted upon currently) appears to be inconsistent with the government's biomass energy policy. The use of biomass, which is intended to be a lower carbon renewable fuel, could ameliorate energy problems especially in the short to medium term, as, unlike most other fuel sources, it can be

60 years on: meetings with remarkable (footplate) men

CHARLIE MAYO recently published the diary he kept when he was a young fireman at Kings Cross from 1952 to 54. Now in his 80s, he was then a young left activist and the pages he admits are 'less concerned with trains than with the men who drove them'. They contain a rich picture of his working life in those distant days. The book – 'Ghosts of Steam' – is a replica of the notebook he kept at the time, which makes his memories all the more powerful and direct because they are not revised or corrected to fit modern day values or attitudes. They are sometimes touching, often funny and always, without exception, utterly honest. **CHRIS PROCTOR** went to meet him ...

C HARLIE MAYO, 85, once a Kings Cross loco driver now living in Cornwall, explains that the publication of his diary fulfilled a promise made in 1986 to the historian Raphael Samuel to make it available to major libraries and social history research centres. A photocopy of the diary has been in Ruskin College library since 1986, and now it is available in print. Its descriptions of working life on the footplate in the middle of the twentieth century are invaluable.

But in his contemporary account the railmen he worked with are not ghosts: they are men, living again. Here are the rail workers of that time, warts and all, going about their business with all the foibles of our common humanity. We hear the echoes of the banter of the mess-room six decades hence, the political views of the footplate men and the social conditions of those days.

One story in particular will haunt anyone who reads these pages. Young Charlie was with Driver Horcroft, a man 'small and worn away and his eyes tired and dim' on his final day of work, which was his 65th birthday. He'd worked on the railway for 48 years.

There was no pension for Driver Horcroft. 'When I was in the First World War, I didn't think I was lucky but I get a pension for it. It's f**k all but it's more than I get for working for 48 years.

'And they can't give me half a day.' He shrugged. 'Well, f**k 'em. I'm taking it. They



Charlie Mayo: railwayman, singer, academic, broadcaster, writer and socialist

won't pay me for it, but I'm taking it. The missus won't be expecting me but I'm clocking off at two.'

Which is what he did. 'Goodbye, mate,' Charlie said, 'and all the best.'

He walked off across the tracks, carrying in his hand his tea can.'

'I can still see that enamel can today,' says Charlie.

It was a harsh working environment and he records the day he watched helplessly as he saw 'a lad under the engine' when hot ash ignited the paraffin he was using to clean the engine. He emerged with his face blistered by the flames. But then there were different memories – like that of Jim Ellis, whose sister sang in the chorus at Covent Garden. 'Jim

looked up at the ceiling his face transfigured as if in prayer. 'Oh Christ, he said, she can't half f**king sing!'

Charlie retains the 'great admiration' he had then for the men he worked with; men who Driver Jim Howarth said, 'Railways went through the back of their spine like Blackpool went through rock.'

Charlie leaves no doubt that it was hard physical work and this is no Disneyland account. It is an absorbing piece of our social history. We meet men whose job it was to stand on uneven coal in a tender at three in the morning in the dark, trying to get a leather water pipe into the engine's water tender by beating it with a shovel because it is frozen solid while level sleet drives into his face.

And there were problems of a different kind. The so-called 'colour bar' dispute broke out while Charlie was at the depot, when a black carriage cleaner was promoted to shunter. The shunters refused to accept him. The company insisted, and the NUR shunters came out on strike.

Charlie was appalled. 'There I was, with all the conviction of youth, telling the NUR they should be going back to work,' he says. 'Although I was right, it was a rather arrogant

“ WE HEAR THE ECHOES OF THE BANTER OF THE MESS-ROOM SIX DECADES HENCE ”

thing to be doing.'

And he didn't just tell people at the depot what he thought. A great supporter of the English Folk Song movement, Charlie wrote a song about it that was recorded by Ewan MacColl! It concluded with these words:

'Men don't let smoke get in your eyes
Kindle that flame and keep it bright
To proud tradition still be true

And make those joined hands black and white.'

Was that, he wonders, part of the process that led to a change in the ASLEF logo that came to have hands of different colours?

Charlie's honesty doesn't stop at self-criticism, even today. He still ponders if he did the right thing when he left the railway. It happened because, with the generous backing of Bob Lunniss, who was secretary of the King's Cross branch of ASLEF from the 1930s to the 1960s, he won a scholarship to Ruskin College. 'It was the first thing I'd ever won,' he says.

He had a childhood without privilege and joined the railways after serving as an Able Seaman in the navy in the last world war.

Bob Lunniss, to whom his book is dedicated



The view from his Cornish home ...



... is a far cry from the sheds where he worked in his youth

along with Raphael Samuel, wanted him to learn at Ruskin and come back to the branch to share his new knowledge. It was with a heavy heart that Charlie told Bob that he had won another scholarship: this time to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he read English

and History. Despite his change of fellow-student, Charlie shone and after getting a degree, he began teaching in further education colleges. He says he never planned any career. 'Opportunities arose,' he says. 'And I said 'yes'!

This unusual strategy led to his becoming in turn the deputy head of a Liberal Studies department and then to a post in the Inner London Education Authority where he championed the use of television as a classroom teaching tool. 'I had a wonderfully free hand, as none of us knew what we were doing!' he says. His final job was at the Independent Broadcasting Authority where he was the national adult education officer for 14 years.

Charlie now lives in the beautiful Cornish fishing village of Polperro with Esther, who has been a central part of his life since they met as



Charlie with the book made up of a diary he kept over 60 years ago



Charlie still keeps his 1952 ASLEF membership card with pride



The front of Charlie's rich book of social history

youngsters in 1946. It's been a long and interesting journey, but of one thing I am sure: his old mentor from King's Cross, Bob Lunniss, would be proud of what Charlie has made of his life.

● To buy a copy of Charlie's book 'Ghosts of Steam', contact sue@brentham.com. It costs £12 including post and packing. What a bargain for a visit to another age!

A HUNDRED YEARS OF UNION

Whilst the rise and rise of the super-rich is an ever present topic in the news nowadays, in the May 1913 ASLEF Locomotive Journal, Nota Bene reported on the demise of one of the first industrial capitalists ...

"Another of America's multi-millionaires has passed away in the person of J. Pierpont Morgan. Mr. Morgan died at Rome on March 31st, at the age of 76. His wealth was fabulous, but exactly what his fortune was will never, it is said, be known. Estimates vary as widely as from £20,000,000 to £100,000,000. Anyway, he wasn't 'hard up.' He was King of the Trusts

without rival, and when he acquired by purchase a majority of the stock of the Equitable Life Assurance Society of New York, one American paper said: 'J.P. Morgan owns the earth.' Of the assets of that society the great financier and his associates controlled no less than £90,000,000! He has a voice in the control of properties capitalised at

£1,297,500,000 – more wealth than was ever in the hands of one man. An American writer said of him: 'This amount is greater by over £200,000,000 than the entire annual revenue of the forty-three principal nations of the world. It is greater by almost £400,000,000 than all the world's gold, coined and uncoined.'

"One of Mr. Morgan's earliest achievements was the reorganisation of the Albany and Susquehanna Railroad, for the control of which he had to fight Jay Gould and James Fisk. Following the successful reconstruction of this railway, Mr. Morgan undertook

the financial salvation of many other important railroad companies, with the result in 1902, the Morgan interests were predominant over 55,000 miles of railway in the States."

After listing the many rail companies Mr. Morgan acquired interests in Nota Bene writes: "His secret was simple enough, to find the necessary capital, to eliminate waste, stop rate wars, to substitute combination for competition, and to secure the unity of management to great systems equal in mileage to the railways of Germany and the United Kingdom combined."

● Extracts selected and edited by Mick Holder

Two share 100 years of membership in Cardiff

The highlight of last month's Cardiff branch meeting was the presentation of two 50-year service medallions to retired members Bernie Sluman and John James. A retirement certificate was also presented to Graham Murray, who recently retired from railway service.

The presentations were made by the General Secretary who we were delighted to welcome to our meeting. Mick Whelan brought with him EC member Brian Corbett and District Organiser Stan Moran.

Mick had opened the evening by giving the branch a talk on recent developments affecting the rail industry and offering an insight into the re-franchising fiasco. Later Brian Corbett spoke on matters at head office while Stan Moran concentrated on events within the District.

The Cardiff branch would like to express its thanks to Mick, Brian and Stan for doing us the honour of attending our branch.

J. F. Bracchi,
Secretary, Cardiff branch



Graham Murray with his well-earned retirement certificate



Mick Whelan offers his best wishes to Bernie Sluman



John James celebrates half a century on the railways with the GS

Thanks for warm Derby welcome, say RMS

Officers of the Retired Members' Section (RMS) were extended a kind reception when they accepted an invitation to the Derby branch's March meeting. The RMS reps reported that the section,

which now boasts 2,100 members, plays an active part in both the National Pensioners Convention (NPC) and the European Federation of Retired and Older People (FERPA).

Ray Jackson (Chair) and

Tony West (Secretary) of the RMS say they then heard some useful good-up-to-date reports from the LLC, Health & Safety and Company Council reps, 'with EC member Dave Calfe in top form'.

They were impressed that 25 members came along on a freezing evening with an England football match being broadcast. 'It shows the commitment of ASLEF members,' Tony says.

The RMS told the branch about the motions it has submitted to this year's AAD. One supports the NPC's policy of promoting key principals of the Health & Social Care Bill, such as a national care service which delivers at the point of need, and the professionalisation of the care service through improved pay, terms and conditions, training and regulation. Another calls for a vigorous campaign with other unions and voluntary groups against the government's austerity cuts which are an attack upon the most vulnerable in our society. The cruelty of myths being

perpetrated that demonise claimants of any description is nothing short of obnoxious.

They also heartily recommended the new Ken Loach film 'The Spirit of 45' (which includes interviews with ASLEF retired members). It shows how, after the war, the working classes fully supported Labour's socialist programme of building homes, hospitals, schools – and the NHS.

The final message from the RMS was, 'We must continue to organise, petition, lobby MPs, make our voices heard or take direct action – because there really is an alternative, and it's worth fighting for.'

Ray Jackson and Tony West, Chair and Secretary, Retired Members Section



The General Secretary and District EC member Dave Calfe and Organiser Dicky Fisher attended the Stourbridge retired members dinner last month. Ken Gardener sent us this photograph of those at the event, along with his thanks to the guests for attending.



Comradeship, recognition – and refreshments! – in Bishop's Stortford

Over the moon in Bishop's Stortford

The April meeting of Bishop's Stortford Branch was very much a social event and was held at the Half Moon Public House.

It was very well-attended, boosted by the presence of several retired members, our DCC representative, Bro Alan Edwards, our District Organiser, Bro Nigel Gibson, and our National Organiser, Bro Simon Weller.

The business was dealt with briskly and was followed by a few words from Simon who then presented service badges to Bros Andy Bell, Neil Bennett, Trevor Camp, Allan Carter, Adrian Hislop and Ian Waker. The meeting finished with a splendid buffet, supplied by Sis Michaela Hawkes. **Richard Roscoe, Secretary, Bishop's Stortford branch**

BRIGHTON BRANCH MEETING - 21ST MARCH 2013

Sister Zoi Kakouris received her 20-year badge last month from the chairman of her Brighton branch, Brother Steve Chatfield, reports Mark Johnson (Brighton branch secretary)



OBITUARY

BRIAN GREIG A GREAT LOSS AT ONLY 56

It is with sadness that I report the unexpected death of Driver Brian Greig.

Brian joined the railway in August 1976, starting as a shunter at Dundee. He moved to the footplate where he worked his way up to driver at Dundee until the depot closed. Along with many of his colleagues he then moved to Perth to continue driving trains.

A few years down the line it was time for a career change and Brian returned to Dundee as station grade 'B' where he continued to serve the travelling public until his untimely death on 5 March.

Brian was only 56 when he passed away and he will be missed by his many friends and colleagues at Scotrail.

On behalf of Dundee branch, I wish to pass on our condolences to Brian's wife Marlene and the family.

Graeme Dodds, Chairman, Dundee Branch

Upcoming events

◉ DIDCOT ANNUAL REUNION - 4 MAY

The Didcot branch will hold its annual reunion meeting on Saturday 4 May from noon at the GWR Staff Club in Didcot. Past, present and associate members are all equally welcome. More information from A. Lyford.

◉ BRIGHTON & SUSSEX REUNION - 7 MAY

An informal open afternoon will be held for all retired and working members with a connection to Brighton and Sussex Motive Power Depots in the Brighton Railway Club, Belmont (off Dyke Road) from 14:00 on Tuesday 7 May 2013. Further details from Paul Edwards (07402 478 2780) or Paul Horan (07868 757 492).

◉ HITHER GREEN - 8 MAY

The Hither Green 'Old Boys' reunion will be held on Wednesday 8 May from 12:00 in the Greyhound (Wetherspoon's) pub in London Road, Bromley (just off the Market Square). All welcome. For more information contact Ray Cooper or Len Blackford from the Retired Members' Section.

◉ ENFIELD AND NORTH EAST LONDON REUNION - 17 MAY

The annual Enfield and North East London Re-union will take place at the Jolly Butchers pub at 168 Baker Street Enfield EN1 3JS on Friday 17 May from 19:00. All ex-North East London staff and other rail staff are welcome to attend to listen to reminiscences about the 'good old days' and the odd pint. Further details from Steve Jestico on 07788153711.

◉ OLD OAK COMMON - 11 JUNE

The Paddington (Old Oak Common) Old Boys reunion is to be held at the Acton Garden Village club ('Ponderosa') on 11 June. Please inform any of 'the old boys' with whom you are in contact. The traditional invites will not be sent out, but for further information contact robertmorse@hotmail.co.uk.

◉ EX-WEST ANGLIA BR REUNION - 13 JULY

There will be a reunion of ex-West Anglia British Rail on 13 July at the Crown pub in Broxbourne at 18:00. Come along and remember days when 'the job got done and it was fun!' For further information contact Les Bennett at Bishop's Stortford.

◉ RIPPLE LANE SWANSONG - AUGUST

It will be 20 years in August since Ripple Lane closed its doors and we are planning to hold a final farewell ticketed function at the LT Club in Hornchurch to mark the anniversary. Watch this space for further announcements. The gatherings at noon on the first Friday of the month continue. Enquiries to Cliff Blackwell.

**Don't let it cost
you your job!**



Here's another benefit of working for ASLEF

Why you should join the AA affinity scheme

- Get the AA's best prices at enrolment – on average 10% cheaper than buying direct online
- Plus a 10% discount at renewal every year*
- More dedicated Patrols than any other UK breakdown service**
- Members are rewarded with enhanced breakdown benefits at renewal

To join, call

0800 048 0075

Quoting reference F0751

PRICES FROM
£32*
on average 10% cheaper than theAA.com

Breakdown Cover

AA Your 4th Emergency Service

*£32 is based on Vehicle cover for Roadside only. Renewal discounts are off AA standard recurring annual prices. Other levels of cover are available. Offer only available to ASLEF employees by calling the number given, quoting the stated reference and paying annually by direct debit under a recurring transaction arrangement. Enrolment offer available to new Members for their first 12 months of Membership only. Renewal offer available to ASLEF employees who are existing AA Members, or who join under the enrolment offer, and will be available at each renewal date until they cease to be ASLEF employees or the withdrawal of this scheme. Offer not available in conjunction with any other offer/discount or on any other AA product/service. Best prices do not apply when purchasing from cashback/affiliate sites. Prices correct at time of issue. **Mintel – UK Vehicle recovery report, September 2012.

Automobile Association Insurance Services Limited is authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority (FSA). Registered office: Fanum House, Basing View, Basingstoke RG21 4EA. England & Wales. Registered number 2414212.

Have we got your number?



Do we have your up-to-date contact details?

- Mobile phone number
- Current email address

Providing this information will allow us to send you targeted and timely information, particularly in times of dispute or unrest.

There are a number of ways to get this information to us:

- Update your details via the ASLEF website www.aslef.org.uk and log into the member area.
- Email info@aslef.org.uk Include your full name, branch, mobile number and email address in the body of the email.
- Give your name, mobile number and email address to your branch secretary, to post on to head office. Your details will not be handed on to third parties.



WANTED



WOMEN MEMBERS

interested in being sponsored to attend conferences as visitors

GET MORE INVOLVED

learn more about the union and see how conferences work

UPCOMING CONFERENCES INCLUDE the unions annual conference, TUC womens conference, labour party and TUC congress

CONTACT Wendy Hurst, Secretary of ASLEF's women's committee
Tel: 07788 153 932 or email wendy.hurst3@ntlworld.com

FRANK BRINING A GENUINELY NICE PERSON

It is with great sadness that I report the passing of retired Leeds Driver Frank Brining. Frank passed away aged 67, on the 12 March after bravely battling illness for many years.

Frank joined the railway in 1961 and was based at Stourton in Leeds. Following its closure he moved to Holbeck Depot in 1968. He then went to Neville Hill in Leeds to be made up to

driver. His final move was in 1986 to Leeds Depot where he remained until he retired in 2010.

Frank was a genuinely nice person, a stalwart of the branch and a true 'ASLEF man'. He encouraged new drivers to join our union and was always happy to spend time with any driver to share his wealth of experience of the railway and

life in general.

Outside work, Frank loved spending time with his family, and their holidays were always a special time. He was always up for a party and was a regular at our branch Christmas socials. It has to be said that Frank looked dashing in his suit and bow tie!

Friday nights were special to Frank. He enjoyed a drink with

his good friend, retired driver Graham Liversidge. They spent the night winding each other up and putting the world and the railway to right.

It is a pleasure to have known Frank and an honour to have been his friend.

Our thoughts are with Frank's beloved wife Ann and his sons David and Matthew at this sad time.

Pauline Cawood, Secretary, Leeds branch

GLYN ROWLANDS AN ENCOURAGING AND GENTLE MAN

When it came to the drivers' rules exams, all the nervous hopefuls wanted their 8-hour one-to-one grilling across the table from ex-Royal Navy man Glynn Rowlands. Not that he left you off easily, but his gentle manners and his opening gambit of, 'I'm not here to fail you, lad' would drag correct answers from the far corners of your memory.

Leaving school in 1944, Boots and

Raleigh beckoned, but young Glynn found employment at a former Midland Railway MPD in Nottingham. Promotion had him changing his allegiance to the former Great Central shed at Annesley, where he worked the famous 'Windcutter' freight trains to Woodford Halse. When the depot closed, Glynn changed company again and shunted to the 'Wessy' at Bescot.

His final move was to the Traction Inspectorate at Manchester Piccadilly.

He had a wonderful cryptic wit and as, at the age of 84, he was lowered into the ground on the thousand foot high Biddulph Moor which he loved so much, it started to snow on us. He would have liked that! We shared our favourite quotes including, 'If you can't find god up here,



Glynn worked for 48 years on the railway

give up!' and 'I was an engine driver. I never drove a train in my life!'

T'ra, duck. You gave me my 'ticket to ride' and I shall never forget you for that.
Mel Thorley, retired Longsight driver

PETER NEWBURY FORMER HITCHIN DRIVER

It is with great sadness that I must report the passing of Brother Peter Newbury of our Hitchin branch.

Peter was a branch stalwart and dedicated local representative who carried out his rep duties with good humour and patience.

One of the last steam men, Peter served on the footplate for 50 years and was proud to be presented with a medallion marking this achievement by the general secretary.

Now Pete has been moved up to the top link. He will be greatly missed by all who had the privilege of knowing him.

Peter Dunlop, retired member, Hitchin

MAURICE ('MORRY') BANKS – STORTFORD STALWART

'Morry' as we all knew him, passed away suddenly on 12 February, aged 81 years. His funeral took place at the packed Church of St Mary's, Elsenham, on 28 February. Ex-Bishop's Stortford driver John King, a life-long friend of Morry, gave an account of memories together on the railway, which raised a few smiles.

Morry was always active in the Branch and often, when we all thought a matter was settled, he would come up with the words, 'Hark you! Here a minute!' Our hearts go out to his family.

Alan Swann, retired driver, Bishop's Stortford

PETER WESTON ONLY 47

It is with regret we announce the passing of former Wimbledon Park driver Peter Weston aged only 47.

Peter was a driver at Wimbledon for 20 years before leaving to return to his native Liverpool.

Known for his dry Scouse wit, Peter will be missed by many friends and former colleagues throughout the South West Trains network.

Chris Sneddon, Secretary, Wimbledon branch

ALAN TOTTY DERBY LOSS

Derby branch has the sad news of the passing of retired colleague Alan Totty at the age of 67.

Alan started his career at Burton-on-Trent and moved to Derby upon the closure of Burton in 1976. He stayed at Derby until retirement from Cross Country Trains. He was a devout Christian who converted to Catholicism shortly before his retirement and made many new friends at his local church. Despite his failing health he was proud to achieve 50 year's service on the railway on the day of his retirement.

A well-attended funeral took place in his local church with colleagues from throughout his career joining friends and family. Derby has lost another of its characters. Rest in peace, Alan.

Eamonn Tague, Secretary, Derby branch

DAVE HIGGINSON A GREAT CHARACTER

It is with sadness and regret that I have to report that former driver Dave Higginson of Freightliner Heavy Haul at Eastleigh has passed away at the age of 64.

Dave was one of the railway's great characters. He was never seen without his lighter and roll ups. Many older drivers on the former South Central division of BR have many stories of Dave which might not fit into today's world, but gave many of us a good laugh. Our thoughts and best wishes go to Dave's wife Elaine and all the family.

Paul Barber, Secretary, Eastleigh branch



These are the pages where you talk to us. We welcome your letters, either by mail to the **ASLEF Journal at 77 St John Street London, EC1M 4NN** or by email to **journal@aslef.org.uk**. Because of our space constraints, please try to keep your contributions as short as you can. This month we continue our **STAR LETTER feature**. The immensely lucky winner will pocket a rich range of ASLEF regalia!



No debate without information

A full page in the Journal devoted to a debate on this country's EU membership, as advocated by Bro Ken Hall last month, might be useful.

But most important is that people arguing the pros and cons are properly informed.

I recommend two publications; a small booklet called 'A Constitution for Europe' (ISBN 92-894-6114-4) published in 2004 gives a condensed history and principles of the European Union; and 'The EEC and Britain', a socialist perspective by the Labour Party (ISBN 086117 002 4 1977).

I tried to urge the North West Members of the European Parliament to have the inexpensive 'Constitution for Europe' distributed to every household in the UK before any referendum – but with no luck.

Ignorance is not bliss.

W. Potter, retired member, Maghull

Europe has brought benefits

The EU and some of its institutions need to change and should serve us all better than they do but, in his letter in the April Journal Ken Hall ignored the long list of advantages of our membership of the EU.

Maybe the most advantageous to us working people are the labour and equality rights that we have thanks to the EU - labour protection and enhanced social welfare; enhanced health & safety regulations; smoke-free workplaces; equal pay legislation; minimum holiday entitlement; the right not to work more than a 48-hour week without overtime; age regulations; gender equality regulations; sexual orientation regulations; disability rights and many more.

Recent UK governments, even Labour ones, have eroded workers' rights and have fought hard against efforts to make the lives of working people better. The few rights we have clawed back are mainly down to the EU.

The cost of losing one life must be much more than any other consideration. Almost 70 years without a major European war is priceless. Did coming together to form today's

EX-MINER DOESN'T MISS MAGGIE

I am writing to protest at Ed Miliband's condemnation of people 'celebrating' the death of Margaret Thatcher.

I think Ed needs to be reminded that he is in the position of Labour Party leader due mainly to the trade union vote.

I – and quite a few of my colleges – were striking miners in 1984/5. I for one will never forget the legacy of Thatcher destroying communities not only in Yorkshire but South Wales, Kent, the Midland, North East and

Scotland.

I am always proud to say I have been a member of one great trade union – the NUM – and now a member of another great union – ASLEF.

I hope Mick Whelan and other members of ASLEF's executive committee point out to the Labour Party executive that they cannot guarantee ASLEF support if they continue to laud and praise the late Baroness and Tory policies.

J. S. Donlon, Driver, Leeds

EU really have nothing to do with that?

Ken also described the European Arrest Warrant as 'sinister'. If something is going to aid the courts and police to fight crime, including the police and courts in the UK, what's sinister about that? I'd be more worried about that daft extradition treaty we have with the US than being arrested anywhere in the EU.

We could vote to leave the EU in a future referendum and it would carry on without us. If we wanted to trade with it, as we surely would, we'd have to conform to its standards. We'd be told what those standards are instead of having any say in what they should be. How is that an improvement?

The right wing press is the most vociferous against the EU. You don't have to believe what they say. I am suspicious of their bias and see it as one more very good reason to think that the EU could be a good thing.

Jim Peters, King's Cross Branch

Ken summed up EU

Ken Hall's star letter in the April Journal ('Yes to Europe trade, no to the EU') is just about the best summing up of why we should leave the EU that I have read.

If the EU was a private company and the auditors would not sign off their accounts, the Serious Fraud Squad would be called in and the directors would land up in prison – but no one in the EU is ever brought to account for their actions.

As regards the unelected president Herman van Rompuy, I read he is standing down this year and will receive £50,000 a year pension. Nice work if you can get it.

As a euro-sceptic myself, I endorse everything that Ken Hall says.

Alf Lowe, Upminster

What does UKIP really mean?

I was disappointed to read the General Secretary's article in April's Journal. He stated he didn't want to be over-dramatic when describing Germany's political position in the 1930s. Yes, the German citizens did lose faith in the political process – but this was caused by high levels of unemployment, economic depression and the fact that families were starving and on the streets. This doesn't sound too dissimilar to what's happening in parts of Europe now.

Could this be down to Mr Barroso and his friend, with their 'Euro-vision' which is causing so much pain in Europe, particularly with the young?

If the GS is looking for historical links between Hitler and our political parties – well, Hitler was a politician who was thrown into prison for a criminal act. Sadly this is all too familiar today.

I'm certainly losing faith with politics when MPs show nothing but contempt for us and the law, like the ex-Eastleigh Member of

Parliament.

But I disagree with the GS's analogy of what UKIP 'really' means. UKIP took a decision to vote against the resolution on asbestos, which was their democratic right. If we are to believe these people are dangerous, what does that make a Labour Government that entered into an illegal war with Iraq in 2003 and the same Labour Government that commissioned the McNulty Report?

Dangers come in all colours and until this Labour Party returns to its true core values, voters will continue to look elsewhere for answers.

Jeff Turner, Driver, Barnham

Concentrating on smoke

With reference to Birmingham New Street Driver Phil Murray's letter in the April ASLEF Journal about Smokers in the Driving Cab and his unfounded fear of passive smoking, he needs to pay less attention to unproved scare-mongering government propaganda - and open his window.

As he will know, train driving is a vocation that needs 100% concentration at all times and smokers require their nicotine fix in order to maintain this. Smokers did not agree or vote for laws to be introduced to ban smoking. Only non-smokers agreed to this draconian law to suit their own ends and needs.

Personally as a smoker I find other people's body odour and over-use of perfumed deodorants and after-shaves much more offensive and think both should be banned from the working environment.

I know my views will upset the non-smoking fraternity but they are more than happy to benefit from the extortionate taxes we provide to the Treasury - amounting in my case to the tune of almost £1,000 a year!

Mark Smith, Driver, Wigan

No smoke without ire

Rarely am I roused enough to respond to one of the letters published in the Journal, but the comments of Driver Phil Murray in the April issue regarding smoking have annoyed me. While I agree entirely with his sentiments I am completely flabbergasted at his comment, 'I will hold the TOC responsible for any breathing problems I may be unfortunate enough to develop'. All Train Operating Companies are fully aware that smoking in the workplace is no longer legal and have informed their staff of that. My former TOC issued reminders on numerous occasions, so what exactly does Driver Murray expect his TOC to do? Unless he can show that his TOC management are the ones responsible for smoking in cabs then I would suggest he think again.

The only way to stop those who flout the rules is to report them. Driver Murray should therefore start to report his colleagues to

GIVE US ALL A MEDAL!

Whilst I am pleased for the drivers issued with the Queens Diamond Jubilee Medal for driving the Royal Train (April Journal news), it does rather flag up in my mind the whole issue of patronage.

I have driven the Royal Train, and so have a lot of others. So perhaps we should all have medals? And while we're about it, perhaps my paper-girl should have one too for delivery my aforementioned broadsheet through the recent inclement weather. Or maybe everybody should have one just for turning up? Or maybe, to coin a management phrase, a 'root and branch rethink' is required, or at very least a restructuring.

One proposal might be to turn the whole thing on its head. We could accept the fact that most people do



their jobs with pride and diligence, and we should instead look to the few who do wrong in our society. Maybe we could bring back the practice of branding a large letter 'T' on the forehead for a thief for example, instead of the increasingly devalued honours system.

Paul Howell, driver, Crewe

management in order that they can take action against the offenders. He should also, of course, report the situation immediately to his Route Control and refuse to take over any train cab that has been smoked in. Perhaps he could also jointly hold ASLEF and RMT responsible for any breathing problems he may be unfortunate enough to develop due to their failing to control their members actions?

How would the TOC enforce non-smoking in train cabs? CCTV? Smoke Detectors and associated sprinkler systems? Anti-smoking personnel placed in all train cabs?

Any action taken by a TOC would instantly be met with fusillades of complaints from

those it was supposed to protect as examples of the 'nanny state' and 'management bullying'. Sorry Driver Murray, you need to work out a way of stopping your own union colleagues from smoking rather than blaming management.

Ken Rice, Retired TOC and FOC driver, West Sussex

Answer for Adonis

I work as a service controller on LUL but have retained my ASLEF membership as I believe that this is the only union that has the interests of the safe operation of the

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

To advertise in the ASLEF Journal please phone 020 7324 2400 or send an email to journal@aslef.org.uk



INTERCITY DRIVER LANYARDS: Black with safety clip, features the BR logo and original Intercity font. £4.99 each including p&p. Please call, text or email Greg Burton for payment details. 07930-419850. intercityexpress125@hotmail.co.uk



MOTHERWELL 100 REGALIA: To celebrate its centenary, Motherwell Branch has produced commemorative badges (£5), ties (£7 for blue, blue clip-on or maroon) and brochures (£2.50). Cheques to 'ASLEF Motherwell Branch Centenary Fund' and further information from Andy Jones on 07767077907 or motherwellbs@aslef.org.uk



FAVERSHAM branch is selling mugs and Tee-shirts 'devoted' to Ms Thatcher! Both are £10

and illustrate the branch view of the ex-PM's vicious right-wing policies. They can be obtained from the branch website www.aslef-favershambranch.co.uk or from Andy Cooke at (email) andycooke69@hotmail.com or (mobile) 07771923831.



ENGRAVING: ASLEF driver based in Sunderland branch offers professional engraving at reasonable prices. I can engrave anything you wish, such as the ASLEF logo on a pint tankard which is pictured. For further details contact Paul Potts by email at ppotts1969@hotmail.co.uk.

railway at heart -and not the ego of its public face.

Last month an email bulletin that we receive from the company contained an article relating to a visit by Lord Adonis on 2 April.

Apparently it was the former transport minister's first ride in an underground train (which appears bizarre to me in itself). The article went on, 'He (Lord Adonis) was interested in our 30-second PA standard and agreed this reassured our customers that someone was in control during any delays.'

I would like to know how this 'reassurance' would be given should our trains become driverless – something Mayor Johnson is so keen to introduce! Barry Finn-Hurst, London Underground

Dangers of DAS

Chris Owen's letter in the March Journal completely misses the most salient point raised by Hugh Potten in the January Journal, which is that of cab environment for freight drivers and indeed all train drivers up and down the land.

If significant sums of money can be spent providing equipment that can assist in achieving fuel and other operational savings for the operator of the train by providing an additional piece of equipment in an already-cluttered driving cab - then why is that money not invested in resolving the many health and safety issues (particularly prevalent on freight locomotives) in the first instance? Or at least balanced against it, with any savings reinvested to improve the cab environment?

I'd also like to make a point about professionalism. The DAS system won't tell train drivers anything they shouldn't already know with regard to the ability to 'coast' to the next station or junction in relation to line speed, gradients and running time. After all, one of the most professional attributes and key skills we have as train drivers is route knowledge and how different traction or train formations handle over those routes. The cynic in me says in years to come this 'advisory' system will be used to erode or supplant that route knowledge and quite possibly will be used as another stick with which to hit us over the head if we don't follow its 'advice' unwaveringly!

'Green' policies are a buzz word on the railway these days and are being used as a selling point of the DAS to us as drivers. However, many train operators south of the Thames run off-peak trains in their peak formation because the train operator can save resources and money on drivers and pathways by not splitting trains after the peak and returning them to the depot or sidings until the evening peak. Thus a 6, 8, 10 or 12-car train will run between the peaks carrying a great deal of fresh air... which is not the operational

flexibility that multiple-unit trains were created for! At the end of service when these trains return to sidings and berthing points they are left 'cut-in' with the saloon lighting left switched on until they go back into service on the companies instruction, again to alleviate any performance issue when the train is brought back into service!

It would seem this system is being implemented because of a vast amount of slack in the timetables which are there to mitigate against the performance regime for late running. Yes there have always been allowances of an extra 1 or 2 minutes on certain sections or 'pathing' allowances at certain junctions - but not to the levels we see today.

If a train is able to travel between A and B where the line speed is 100mph at 75mph and still run to time why is the taxpayer burdened with paying Network Rail to maintain and signal that stretch of line at 100mph? If we are serious about increasing the capacity on the busiest railway lines in the UK we need to ensure that train operators cannot 'pad' out timetables and running times to negate the performance regime and then try to make energy and fuel savings on top of that by bringing in technological initiatives like the DAS.

It's almost like they want their cake and to eat it...or at least give it to their shareholders!
Mick Berg, Secretary, Woking Branch

European debate lacks information

Ken Hall's letter about the EU (April Journal) shows a higher degree of knowledge about the subject than usual in these arguments - but still puts the cart before the horse.

He mentions the European Economic Area, although I think it would be more accurate to describe it as the European Free Trade Association. And at that point we have confused the majority of people who would be expected to vote in a referendum.

Thanks to 40 years of the 'establishment' failing to provide any proper information on the subject (and the chinless wonder Michael Gove now restricting what can be taught), plus the biased rantings of the Daily Mail (with its Nazi loving past) and the Murdoch-owned Sun, the majority of the population haven't a clue about what goes on in European institutions. Hands up all those who think the European Court of Human Rights is part of the EU? Wrong, it's run by the Council of Europe, a separate organisation which has far more members. Whilst we're on the subject of the CoE, who thought the Charter on Human Rights came from somebody in Brussels?

Wrong again, it was originally drafted by Winston Churchill and even Gove's history curriculum allows you to know who he was. In fact Churchill made a speech at the Hague Convention where he said there

Delivering the Journal

As a retired member, I would be lost without the Journal, which keeps us in touch with interests we had during our days on the footplate.

I'm glad it is delivered to our homes by Royal Mail, rather than some organisation like TNT which is only interested in bulk mail. Private firms have been allowed to cherry-pick bulk mail delivery by using Royal Mail sorting offices and postal workers, thus making less revenue for the publicly-owned Royal Mail. The privatisation of RM is backed not only by Lib Dems and Tories, but also by the last Labour government.

Private companies would not give the guarantee of one universal price to send mail anywhere in the country without huge increases in postal costs.

P. Begley, retired member, Bedford

should be an international court that could protect people from abuses by their own governments - the best idea a Conservative ever had and now half his party want to scrap it!!

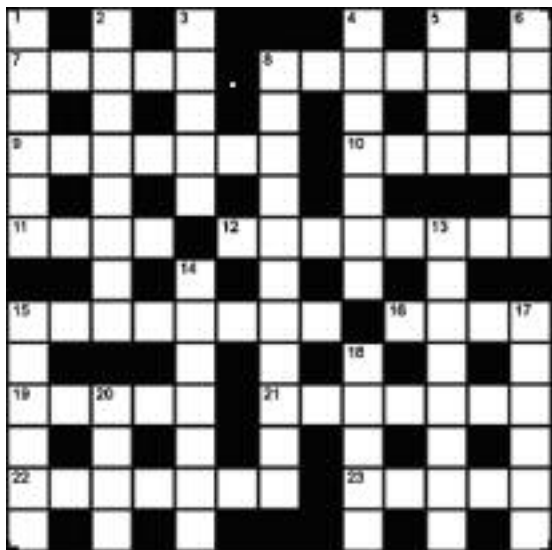
On the day that the April Journal arrived a row broke out about children's heart operations being stopped in Leeds. The people of Yorkshire think it's wrong, so why not let them have a referendum about it - they probably know as much about the subject as they do about Europe. I think it would be reasonable to have a referendum on EU membership at fixed intervals, say every 20 years. But until the people are properly informed we may as well save money and just ask the newspaper owners.

I also think it reasonable to allow the Scots to vote on whether they want remain in a union with England, but how come the English don't get a say? Or for that matter, why can't England and Scotland have a vote on continuing union with Ulster? I am winding you up a bit here, but why are the people most opposed to union with European countries (the east of England) so adamant that union with countries to the north and west must be retained??

As for European arrest warrants, cast your mind back to last year when a teacher ran off to France with a pupil. He committed no offence in France but when he was found by the French police he was on the next plane back, thanks to a European arrest warrant. But also remember the British people who have been extradited to the USA for doing things within Britain that the USA decided were against their laws. Let's get our priorities sorted here.

Steve Bratt, Driver, Crewe

Prize Crossword No. 85 set by Zebedee



Solution to prize crossword No 84 which appeared in the April 2013 edition of the ASLEF Journal

Congratulations to **Fiona Lepine** of **East Sussex**

Across: 7 Higher 8 Onions 9 Scheming 10 Eats 11 Muddier 13 Yacht 15 Using 17 Depends 20 Fair 21 Abundant 23 Errors 24 Ninety

Down: 1 Zinc 2 Shield 3 Praises 4 Foggy 5 Cinema 6 Snatched 12 Upstairs 14 Genuine 16 Narrow 18 Ending 19 Raise 22 Nets

Across

- 7 Small weight (also big cat) (5)
 8 Range of colours (7)
 9 Spot of condensation (7)
 10 Making knot (5)
 11 Fringe benefit; cheer (up) (4)
 12 Tooth-strengthening water additive (8)
 15 Definite; utter (8)
 16 Arduous journey (4)
 19 Devon/Cornwall boundary river (5)
 21 Playhouse (7)

22 Batsman's turn (7)

23 Saltpetre (5)

Down

- 1 Display; delay (4,2)
 2 Unconsciously (8)
 3 (Art) category (5)
 4 Food addict (7)
 5 Ornamental needlecase (4)
 6 West Indian music style (6)
 8 Lands ruled from Vatican once (5,6)
 13 Vex (8)

14 Looking daggers; obvious (error) (7)

15 First Irish county (alphabetically) (6)

17 Guardian, especially of museum collection (6)

18 Creature (5)

20 (Especially food) option list (4)



MARKS & SPENCER

The winner of this month's crossword will receive Marks & Spencer vouchers to the value of £25

Name.....

Address.....

.....

.....Postcode.....

Thanks for all your responses to the 84th ASLEF crossword in the April edition. If you complete this month's crossword please send the solution to the Editor, ASLEF Journal, 77 St John Street, London EC1M 4NN by the 14th of the issue month.

ASLEF'S legal services – your rights for their wrongs!

FREE LEGAL ADVICE ASLEF also provides first class free legal advice – both for members and for their dependents. In the last year, ASLEF has recovered £6,769,848 in damages for all types of cases.

EMERGENCIES If you are an ASLEF member who is arrested or being interviewed by the police and need legal assistance – day or night – you can call the members' Emergency Hotline on 0800 587 7530.

SACKINGS OR OTHER PROBLEMS AT WORK Harassment, discrimination or bullying? If your local, branch or district representative is unavailable, call the Industrial Relations department at union headquarters (020 7324 2400) or email info@aslef.org.uk

Changed your Address?

Name.....

Address.....

.....

Postcode.....

Telephone.....

Branch.....

Membership No.....

Please return coupon to: 77 St John Street, London, EC1M 4NN

More than just a **union**

T THOMPSONS
SOLICITORS

ALL WORK DOESN'T MEAN NO PLAY.



RED BULL SOAPBOX RACE 2013

Calling hotshot drivers and their crews to apply at redbullsoapboxrace.co.uk



ALEXANDRA PALACE, LONDON, JULY 14th